# RUBIN Museum of Himalayan Art

# Strategic Plan

2026–2030

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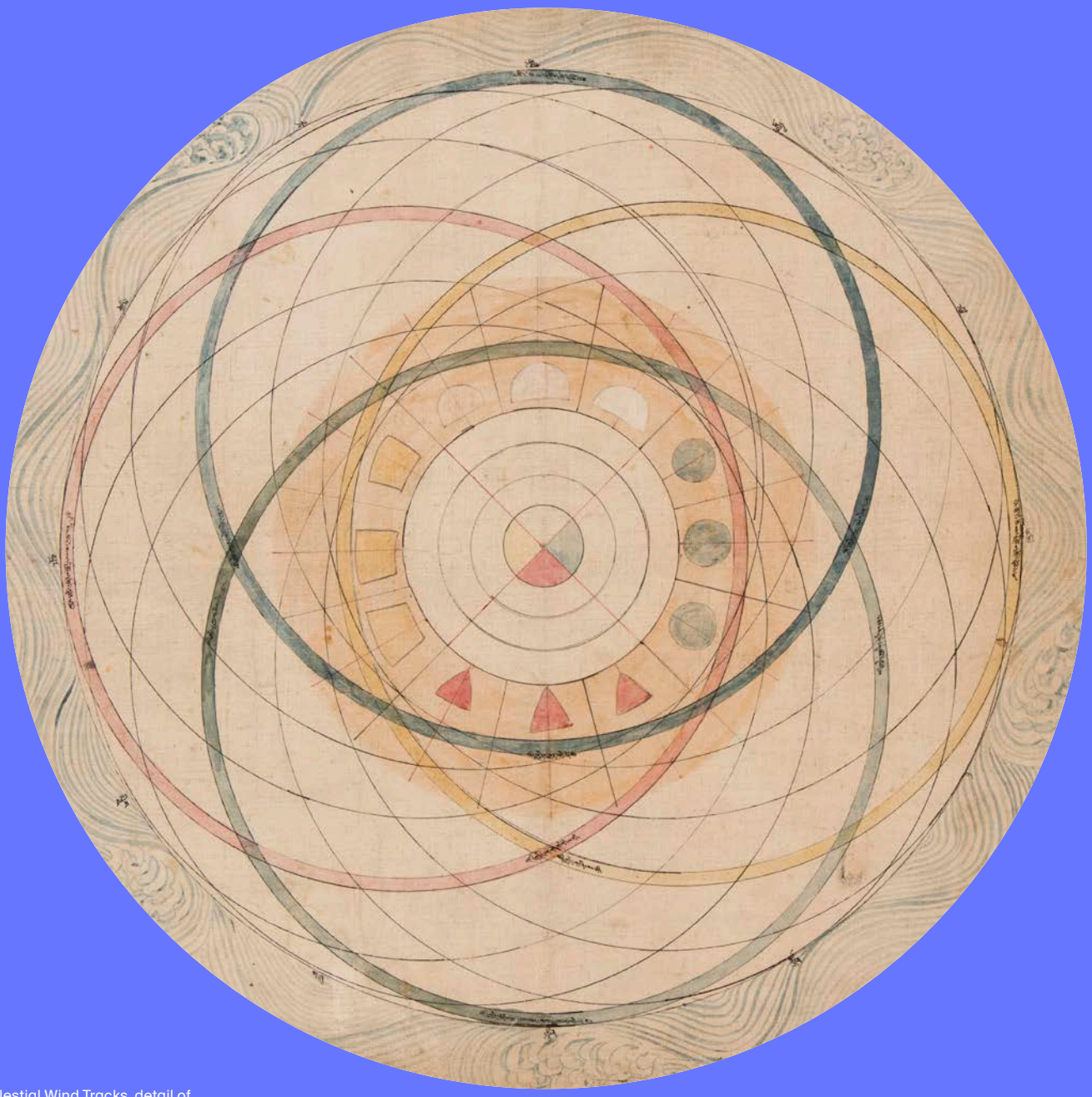
Front cover: Wheel of Life, attributed to Lhadripa Rinzing Chungyalpa (b. 1912, Sikkim–d. 1977); Sikkim; ca. 1930; pigments on cloth; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art; C2004.21.1 (HAR 65356)

# Letter from the director



Celestial Wind Tracks, detail of Kalachakra Cosmology Illustration; Tibet; 16th century; pigments on cloth; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art; C2009.9 (HAR 61200)

# More art for more people in more places

This strategic plan comes at an important time for the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art. After twenty years of successfully operating museum galleries on West 17th Street in New York City, in the fall of 2024 the Rubin transitioned to a bold new operating model as a global museum with a decentralized operation. As an innovation-driven organization, we challenge modern conventions of what a museum is and how it can most impactfully serve today's society. By pioneering a model that aims to transcend the limitations of traditional museum approaches, we seek to bring more art to more people in more places.

This new model, built on partnerships and collaboration, enables the Rubin to **operate locally, nationally, and internationally—** connecting new communities and partners to our mission. This approach aims to expand the impact and public support of the Rubin's mission in today's world. The next five years will be guided by the road map chartered in our 2026–2030 strategic plan. The plan is centered on six key priorities:

**Expand our impact globally:** In our new model, the Rubin serves communities on a global scale, expanding beyond New York City.

**Strengthen representation and visibility of Himalayan art:** The Rubin is expanding access to the collection through partnerships, long-term object loans, and supporting exhibitions that foster cultural understanding, connection, and learning.

**Deepen research and generate knowledge:** Himalayan art is an underrepresented field of study, and our work helps promote its powerful artistic contributions and rich cultural histories to broader audiences.

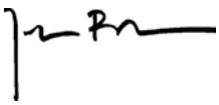
**Support artists working today:** Through annual grants, prizes, and commissions, the Rubin is committed to enabling new artistic projects and amplifying the work of artists.

**Create strategic and dynamic offerings:** The Rubin continues to evolve how it connects with audiences through the development of traveling exhibitions, K-12 programs, digital resources, and projects for educators.

**Advance organizational transformation:** The Rubin will build new business processes, infrastructure, and internal capacity to foster our global impact and achieve these strategic goals with operational excellence and long-term financial sustainability at the core.

These robust strategies can only be achieved with generous public support from individual and institutional philanthropy. The Rubin will build on our fundraising momentum to deepen our impact and sustain our global mission.

The development of this strategic plan involved a multiyear iterative process driven by the Board of Trustees and Rubin staff, and it was powered by the voices and wisdom of those in our institutional orbit. Thank you to our collaborators for stewarding change, driving innovation, and supporting the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art.



Jorrit Britschgi
Executive Director

# About the Rubin, our mission, and values

The Rubin is a global museum dedicated to presenting Himalayan art and its insights. Founded in 2004, the Rubin serves people internationally through exhibitions, participatory experiences, a dynamic digital platform, and partnerships. Inspired and informed by Himalayan art, the Rubin invites people to contemplate the human experience and deepen connections with the world around them in order to expand awareness, enhance well-being, and cultivate compassion. The Rubin advances scholarship through a series of educational initiatives, grants, collection sharing, and the stewardship of a collection of nearly 4,000 Himalayan art objects spanning 1,500 years of history—providing unprecedented access and resources to scholars, artists, and students across the globe.

# Mission statement

**The Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art promotes awareness, cultivates learning and understanding, and fosters meaningful connections to the art of Tibetan, Himalayan, and related Inner Asian cultural regions.**

**We preserve, research, and share our collection, and create dynamic exhibitions and resources for communities and partners around the world.**

Photograph by Liz Ligon

# Core values

## Boldness

We recognize that change is constant and therefore welcome innovation, taking risks, rethinking norms, and being adaptable in pursuit of our mission.

## Collaboration

We foster mutually rewarding relationships among staff, partners, and the people in our communities in which collaborators are supported and empowered in their activities.

## Insightfulness

We offer opportunities for people to learn and gain new insights and perspectives about Himalayan art and cultures, themselves, and the world.

## Compassion

We put empathy in action by being open and accessible to all and cultivating awareness and the skills for compassion.

## Integrity

We demonstrate accountability and a commitment to the objects in the collection and people who created them by acting in alignment with our values and mission.

Green Tara; Tibet; ca. 18th century; gilt copper alloy with traces of pigment; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art; C2005.16.46 (HAR 65469)

# Strategic priorities

The Continent of Jambudvipa, detail from Kalachakra Cosmology Illustration; Tibet; 16th century; pigments on cloth; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art; C2009.9 (HAR 61200)

# 1 / Expand our impact globally

**Over the course of two decades, the Rubin has become the leading institution for Himalayan art, with our activities focused foremost on serving New York City. Operating with a decentralized model enables us to reach broader audiences and creates new possibilities. While remaining rooted in New York City, the Rubin now also supports a range of traveling exhibitions, artist and research initiatives, and partnerships that traverse geographies and serve audiences locally, nationally, and internationally. Through expansive traveling exhibitions, artist initiatives, and projects with partners, the Rubin presents our collection, exhibitions, digital resources, and signature projects on a global scale.**

Buddha Shakyamuni; central Tibet; 14th century; gilt copper alloy; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art; C2001.10.2 (HAR 65025)

## Goal

Serve and engage New York City, the United States, and places around the world with Himalayan art and its insights.

## Strategy

Expand the Rubin's global presence and reputation through partnerships, collaborations, and cross-cultural engagements.

## Objectives

Increase recognition of the Rubin as the leading global organization for learning about Himalayan art.

Develop projects in collaboration with partners throughout the Himalayas, Inner Asian regions, and diaspora communities.

Expand the Rubin's digital ecosystem and associated resources to serve as an online global hub and connector for people interested in Himalayan art.

Black Cloak Mahakala; Tibet; 18th century; pigments on cloth; Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art; gift of the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation; F1996.32.7 (HAR 544)

Mandala Lab in Your Classroom
*Gateway to Himalayan Art* United States National Tour
Public Art Commission
Rubin Museum Distinguished Lecture at The Met
Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room Long-term Installation at the Brooklyn Museum
Long-term loans at Oglethorpe University and more
Mandala Lab European Tour
Mandala Lab Pop-Up Installation
Wangduechhoeling Palace Museum and Cultural Center Bhutan Foundation Partnership
Itumbaha Museum Partnership with Keshchandra Mahavihara Conservation Society
Rubin Museum Himalayan Art Prize Khadhok (2025 Recipient)

# 2 / Strengthen representation and visibility of Himalayan art

**With a robust collection of almost 4,000 objects, the Rubin collaborates with museums and cultural partners through collection-sharing initiatives comprising long-term object loans, the creation of exhibitions, and other strategic partnerships. These initiatives advance the presentation of Himalayan art within museum settings and make the Rubin's collection publicly accessible to new communities, fostering cultural understanding, connection, and learning.**

Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room at the Brooklyn Museum
Photograph by Matthew Carasella

## Goal

Increase the visibility of Himalayan art in cultural institutions worldwide.

## Strategy

Share the Rubin's collection and expertise through long-term partnerships and collaborative exhibitions.

## Objectives

Partner with 12+ museums by 2030, sharing over 200 works from the Rubin's collection.

Establish dynamic partnerships to present Himalayan art to new audiences.

Installing the Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room at the Brooklyn Museum, part of a long-term partnership between the two institutions.
Photograph by Filip Wolak

*Gateway to Himalayan Art*, one of the Rubin's traveling exhibitions, welcomes students, professors, and the local public to learn about the main forms, concepts, meanings, and religious traditions of Himalayan art with objects from the Rubin's collection.
Photograph by Filip Wolak

# 3 / Deepen research and generate knowledge

**Himalayan art is an underrepresented field of study with a deep need for documentation and scholarly study to advance its understanding more broadly. There are opportunities for significant advances to be made through the study of the Rubin's collection, as well as supporting the work of others committed to expanding the understanding of Himalayan art. By supporting research and scholarly work, the Rubin as a respected leader helps promote Himalayan art's powerful artistic contributions and rich cultural histories to broader audiences.**

Photograph by KJ Bowen

## Goal

Advance scholarship and accessibility of Himalayan art through research, documentation, and publication.

## Strategy

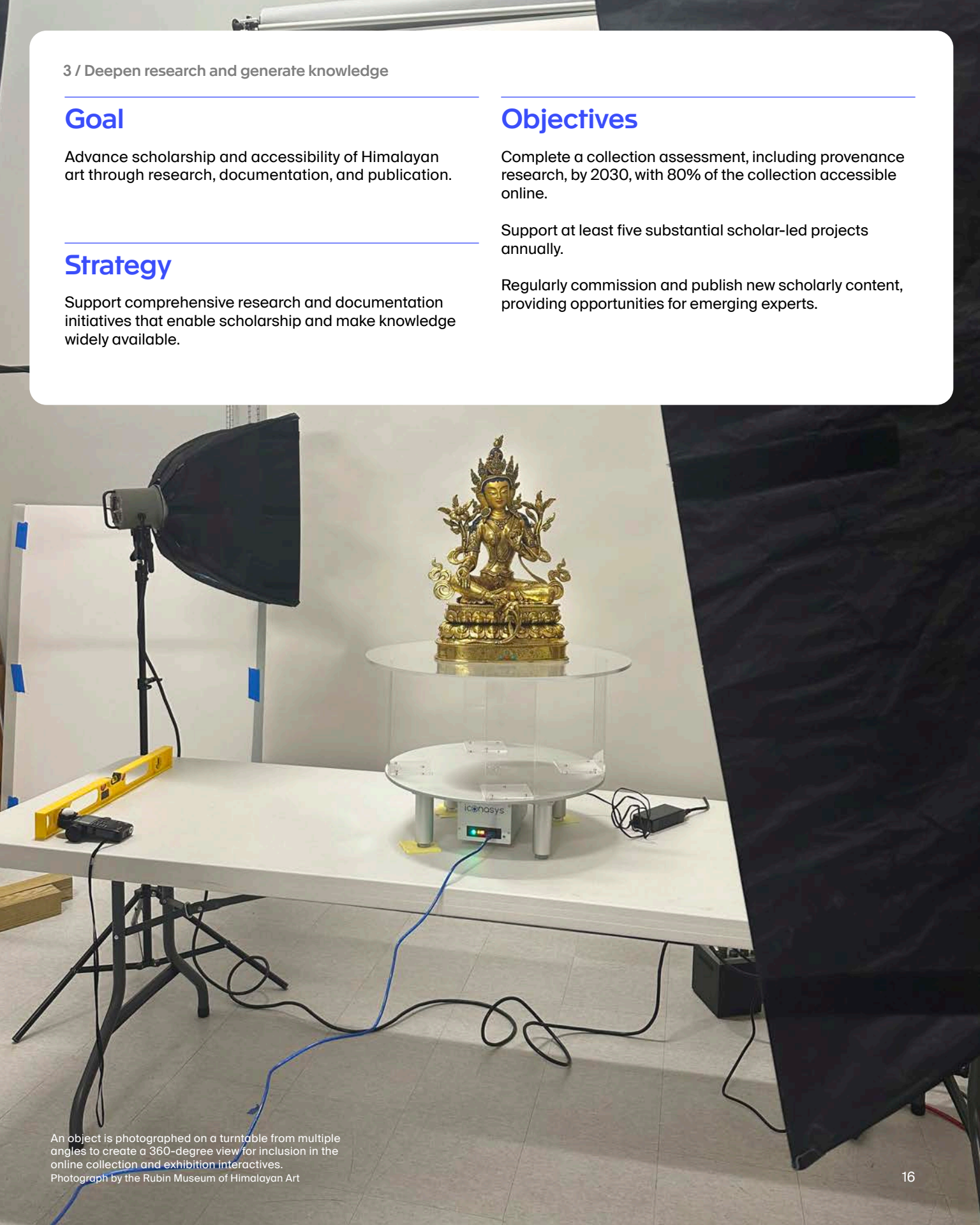
Support comprehensive research and documentation initiatives that enable scholarship and make knowledge widely available.

## Objectives

Complete a collection assessment, including provenance research, by 2030, with 80% of the collection accessible online.

Support at least five substantial scholar-led projects annually.

Regularly commission and publish new scholarly content, providing opportunities for emerging experts.




An object is photographed on a turntable from multiple angles to create a 360-degree view for inclusion in the online collection and exhibition interactives.
Photograph by the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art

Studio Nyandak, a 2025 Rubin x Research grant recipient, received a $25,000 grant to document and safeguard Zanskar's Buddhist heritage in eight places including Karsha Monastery.
Photograph by Studio Nyandak

# 4 / Support artists working today

**The Rubin supports artists working in the greater Himalayan region and diaspora today. We support artistic projects across the globe through grants and art prizes, creative commissions and exhibitions, and the documentation of practices represented in the Rubin's collection.**

Artist Shushank Shrestha in his studio working on sculptures for the Rubin's exhibition *Reimagine: Himalayan Art Now*. Photograph courtesy of the artist

## Goal

Support and amplify the voices of artists whose work connects to Himalayan art.

## Strategy

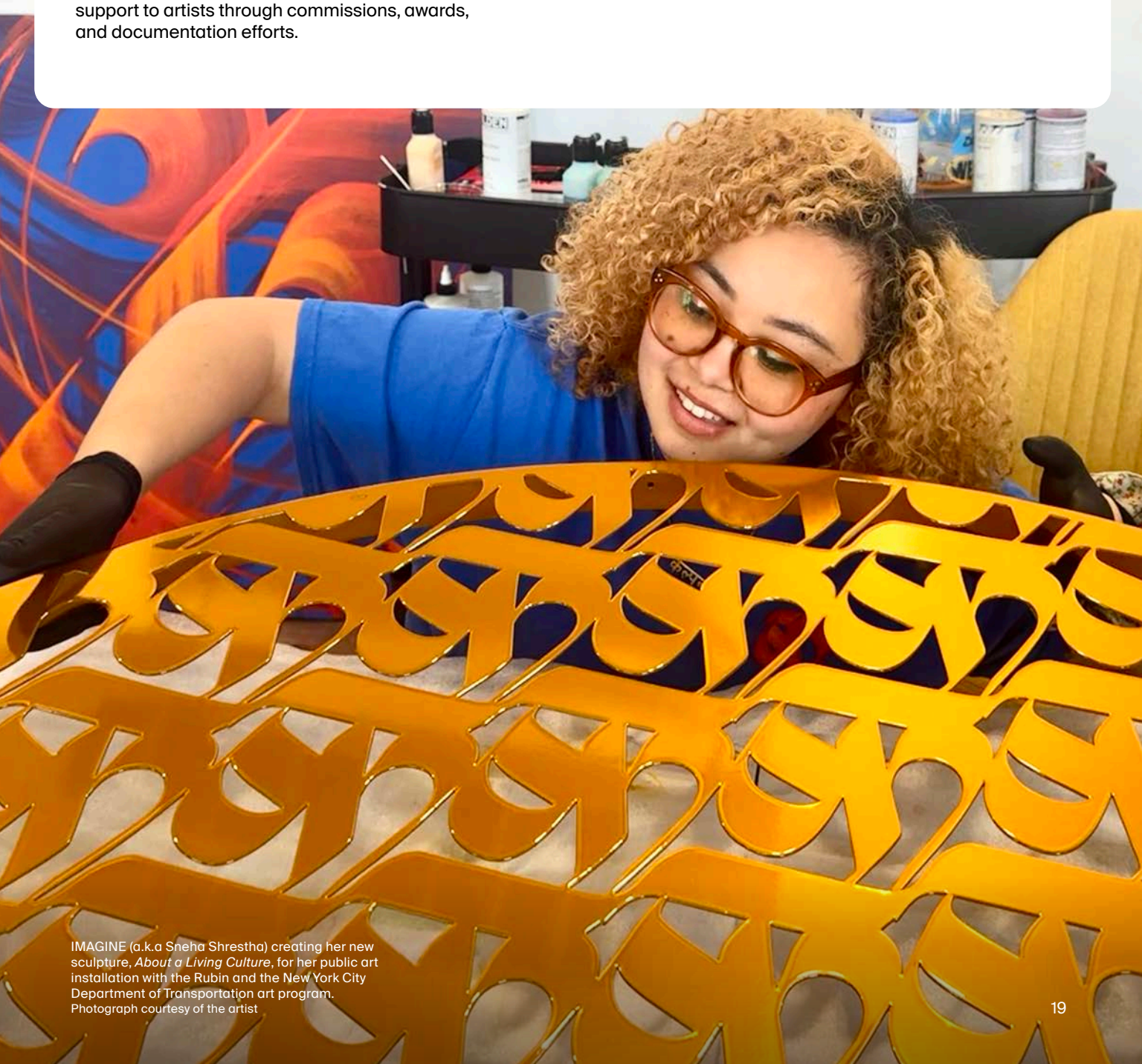
Provide financial, institutional, and promotional support to artists through commissions, awards, and documentation efforts.

## Objectives

Support the creation of 100+ artistic projects by 2030.

Annually award the Rubin Museum Himalayan Art Prize, increasing global visibility for Himalayan artists.

Document and share art-making techniques reflected in the Rubin's collection.



IMAGINE (a.k.a Sneha Shrestha) creating her new sculpture, *About a Living Culture*, for her public art installation with the Rubin and the New York City Department of Transportation art program.
Photograph courtesy of the artist

Khadhok, an artists' collective based in Dharamsala, India, received the 2025 Rubin Museum Himalayan Art Prize. It's the largest international award in support of contemporary art related to the greater Himalayan region.
Photograph by Tenzin Gyurmey

# 5 / Create strategic and dynamic offerings

**Grounded foremost in the collection, the Rubin develops and expands upon signature touring exhibitions and projects. The Museum advances learning across generations, with a unique curriculum designed to cultivate emotional awareness and compassion through Himalayan art and its insights for K–12 students and educators across the globe. Dynamic online content further supports the understanding and appreciation of Himalayan art, with offerings that serve as both unique online resources and complementary resources for in-person experiences.**

Photograph by Jessica Bal

## Goal

Deliver innovative exhibitions and digital experiences that engage audiences with Himalayan art and its insights.

## Strategy

Develop traveling exhibitions, digital projects, and educational resources that extend the Rubin's reach and impact.

## Objectives

Present the traveling exhibition *Gateway to Himalayan Art* at 12+ additional venues, with its associated digital platform regarded as the go-to place for academics and general audiences.

Present the Mandala Lab installation or resources annually, expanding its K–12 curriculum and online reach.

Develop and execute additional traveling exhibitions with partner institutions.

Sustain a flexible, audience-driven digital strategy that integrates all Rubin initiatives.

A Mandala Lab workshop at the global Hearth Summit in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Photograph courtesy of The Wellbeing Project

Mandala Lab in Your Classroom is a free program available to teachers in New York City schools that features hands-on, in-classroom lessons led by teaching artists, focusing on SEE Learning® (Social, Emotional, and Ethical Learning) through activities like creating mandalas and mindful exercises. Photograph by Filip Wolak

# 6 / Advance organizational transformation

**In our new model, we enact new internal processes, team structures, and ways of working that reflect organizational strategies. The Rubin broadens public support and pursues new strategies aligned with a global operating model. In addition to maintaining operational excellence, the Museum ensures financial resources are diverse and leveraged appropriately to enable both maximum impact and sustainability for decades to come.**

Photograph by Dustin Lin

## Goal

Ensure the Rubin's operations, workforce, and resources align with our evolving decentralized model.

## Strategy

Restructure internal systems, workforce, and funding approaches to support sustainable growth and innovation.

## Objectives

Create a dynamic financial model to preserve the sustaining fund and maintain institutional flexibility.

Broaden public support and deepen philanthropic relationships through adaptable fundraising strategies.

Improve internal alignment, collaboration, and innovation.

Augment workforce capacity to work on a global scale, and increase representation of trustees, staff, and collaborators from Himalayan regions and diaspora communities.

Photograph by Filip Wolak

2024 Rubin Museum Himalayan Art Prize winner Tenzin Gyurmey Dorjee sharing his artwork at the opening of *Reimagine: Himalayan Art Now* at Wrightwood 659 in Chicago.
Photograph by Heidi Zeiger

The Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art is excited to work with partners, communities, and collaborators to achieve our ambitious program set through 2030. In this innovative model, we look forward to sharing groundbreaking projects, developing new ways of working, and bringing more art to more people in more places.

A special thank you to the Rubin Board of Trustees and staff who champion expanded access to Himalayan art and its insights.

# Staff

as of February 1, 2026

## Executive Leadership

Jorrit Britschgi, *Executive Director*
Jamie Lawyer, *Deputy Executive Director*
Billy Umana, *Executive Assistant, Director's Office*

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Max Johngren, *Assistant Manager, Major Gifts & Institutional Philanthropy*
Dona Lee Kelly, *Director of Development*
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